



# The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 61 – November 2010

St. Lawrence Division web site: [www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/sld\\_index.htm](http://www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/sld_index.htm)

## *Superintendent's Report*

By Ron Newby

Hello again, looks like I survived the first meeting without any major “incidents”, so I am going to declare the first meeting of the season a success. I forgot to count the attendees but we did have over 30 people come out.

We had a very busy program in September with a couple of clinics on making trees. Mike Hamer gave us a Powerpoint presentation on the effective use of trees while James VanBlitterswyk gave a hands on clinic on making evergreen trees. Bob Farquar closed the morning program with a clinic on scratch building ideas. The afternoon saw us visit Don Leger's Shadetree and Nepean Railroad and

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## *MR 101 appeals to adults and kids*

By Alex Binkley

About 35 would be model railroaders turned up Nov. 6 to learn about the basics of model railroading at the inaugural Model Railroading 101 session put on by the St. Lawrence Division of the NMRA.

The attendance, which included parents and kids, was better than hoped for and SLD members were peppered with plenty of questions from the participants. A handful of them indicated they had been in the hobby for less than a year while others wanted advice on layout design, track and switches and what kind of equipment to buy.

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MR 101 event. Chris Lyon is starting the seminar to a very appreciative crowd.  
Photo: Andreas Mank

# St. Lawrence Division

## Executive Officers

**Superintendent:** Ron Newby  
Phone (613) 841-4165  
Email: oapsry@magma.ca

**Assistant Superintendent:**  
James VanBlitterswyk  
Phone (613) 342-4155  
Email: jvanblitterswyk@magma.ca

**Paymaster:** Greg Montague  
Phone (613) 596-6641  
Email: gm.montague@rogers.com

**Clerk:** Gary Baillargeon  
Phone: (613) 774-2380  
Email: petworth.ems@cyberus.ca

**Dispatcher:** Peter Nesbitt  
Phone (613) 592-0110  
Email: Nesbitt@magma.ca

## Appointed Positions

**Inspector:** Grant Knowles  
Phone (613) 825-5438  
Email: gd.knowles@sympatico.ca

**The Mail Car  
Editor:** Andreas Mank  
Phone: (613) 591-9088  
Email: amank@magma.ca

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### Copy Deadlines

- January Issue - December 15
- March Issue - February 15
- May Issue - April 15
- September Issue - August 15
- November Issue - October 15

Special thanks to Beate Herzig for proof-reading and general nit-picking

Dave Venable's St. Francis Valley Railway (Ken Healy's old layout). It was nice to see the changes on Don's railroad and see the St. Francis Valley Railway running again. Dave is even planning a second level for the St. Francis Valley.

The Kitbusters clinic on October 23<sup>rd</sup> saw 13 people show up to work on their projects and some of them were even working on their scratch building project. The next Kitbusters clinic will be on the afternoon of the November meeting.

Speaking of clinics, we will have a modeling clinic (to be determined) and a railfan tour of the western division of the Canada Atlantic Railway.

Speaking of clinics we are looking for ideas and people to give them. If you have an idea for a clinic or know of someone who can give a clinic, please let us know.

That's all for now, see you at the November meeting!

## *Kitbusters resumes November 27*

**By Alex Binkley**

There will be a kitbusters workshop after the regular meeting of the SLD on Nov. 27 at Kitchissippi United Church.

Close to 20 members showed up for the first session of the season on Oct. 23 although most worked on kits rather than scratchbuilding. Everybody seemed satisfied with the progress they made on their projects during the day. There was also plenty of edifying kibitzing during the session which ran to mid afternoon.

Dates for future sessions in January, February and April have yet to be determined.

Lighting in the meeting areas is poor so make sure you bring your own light. Also the room seems drafty so you may wish to have a sweater.

Any questions contact Alex Binkley at alex.binkley@sympatico.ca or at 613-749-7633 during the day.

## *The ModelRailwayShow.com*

The press release shown on the next page was brought to the editors attention a few weeks ago. It is an example of model railroading embracing new media and I am hoping that there is interest among the membership, therefore it is reproduced in its entirety.



The fast-paced, thought-provoking model railroading podcast

## TheModelRailwayShow.com

For immediate release  
October 19, 2010

### The Model Railway Show launches November 1<sup>st</sup>

*Free podcast engages model railroading enthusiasts in thought-provoking, fun-filled journey*

(Toronto, Canada) - November is National Model Railroad Month, and we're celebrating with the launch of *The Model Railway Show*. The first episode will be available November 1, 2010.

This free podcast follows the classic radio newsmagazine format, featuring the hobby's best-known enthusiasts, along with the hard workers and innovators that keep this exciting hobby moving ahead.

Each episode of *The Model Railway Show* will run approximately 20 minutes, with quick yet informative interviews with a pair of guests. Topics will cover the full spectrum of the model railroad hobby - ranging from interviews with authors, editors and publishers, to chats with officials at the various organizations that keep the hobby growing, in North America and around the globe.

*The Model Railway Show* will broadcast twice a month over the Internet as a podcast. Listeners can subscribe at no cost via iTunes and have shows automatically delivered for listening on their computer, iPod or other digital music device. Alternately, listeners can monitor the show's web site and RSS feed for new episodes, which can be download directly from the show's servers in mp3 or m4a/AAC formats.

Details on how to listen by either method are provided on *The Model Railway Show* web site:

[www.themodelrailwayshow.com](http://www.themodelrailwayshow.com)

*The Model Railway Show* is hosted by Trevor Marshall and Jim Martin. In addition to being lifelong model railway enthusiasts who have worked in a wide variety of scales and gauges, Trevor and Jim both bring professional journalism, writing and radio backgrounds to the show.

At the end of the meeting, one attendee asked how to join the SLD. The answer was to attend the next meeting at the end of November.



After two presentations, the crowd is taking a break and inspecting the display table and the modular layout.  
Photo: Andreas Mank

The meeting room looked like a mini train show. At one end was an HO modular layout with a freight train running around. At the other about 10 tables set up in a L shape were laden with locomotives, freight and passenger cars and structures in all scales from G to N. Mike Hamer also displayed his highly detailed wharf scene that attracted a lot of admiring glances. The attendees were given plenty of time to inspect the models and query their makers.

Chris Lyon was the MC for the event and after he welcomed the participants with an outline of what the day was intended to accomplish, Brian Earl outlined the World's Greatest Hobby Program and played a video about model railroading. Its message of creativity and camaraderie seemed to resonate with the audience.

Mike Hamer talked about the fun aspect of the hobby and described the Friday Night Group of Modellers he helped found in 1997. It now has so many members that it has to meet in two groups to avoid swamping anyone's basement.

Four of SLD's most experienced modellers—Peter Nesbitt, Andreas Mank, Grant Knowles and Bob Farquhar-- were put on the hot seat by the participants with questions on coupler types, how to start in DCC, online sources of information, how to make sure older equipment is a good deal, what track code really means and how to keep kids interested. They learned about a Micro Mart tool to ream poorly performing trucks and how to add weight to cars. It was recommended they try out different DCC systems by visiting layouts and asking a lot of questions and donate all their brass track to Bob.

A more advanced MR101 session is planned for February 5.

## NMRA Dates

SLD Meetings		SLD Workshops	
November 27, 2010	Kitchissippi United Church 630 Island Park Drive		November 27, 2010
			<b>MR 101</b>
January 22, 2011	Kitchissippi United Church		
			February 5, 2010
March 26, 2011	Kitchissippi United Church		
May 28, 2011	TBD		

# Railfair and the CHEO Raffle layout

By Andreas Mank



Sectional Layout by the British OO Scale Model Railway Club from Montreal

The weekend of October 16 and 17 saw the return of Railfair to Algonquin College, still the largest train show in the Ottawa area. The show had the usual mixture of vendors, second chance table and exhibitors. While it might be comforting to some that Railfair presents similar fare each year, it is disconcerting to me how stagnant it appears.

With one exception, the vendors this year were the same as every year. On the exhibits, I only saw one new entry, the British Model Railway Club from Montreal. Their exhibit focuses on modelling one medium sized station in all detail and stands out due to the space given to this one scene and the very realistic broad curve running through it. I find this work quite exemplary and I am looking forward to seeing this layout again in a few years and admire more of their outstanding scenery work as well.



N-Trak module with an industrial switching scene.

An honourable mention should go to one of the N-Trak modules, depicting an industrial scene and designed so that it can be used as a stand-alone switching layout.

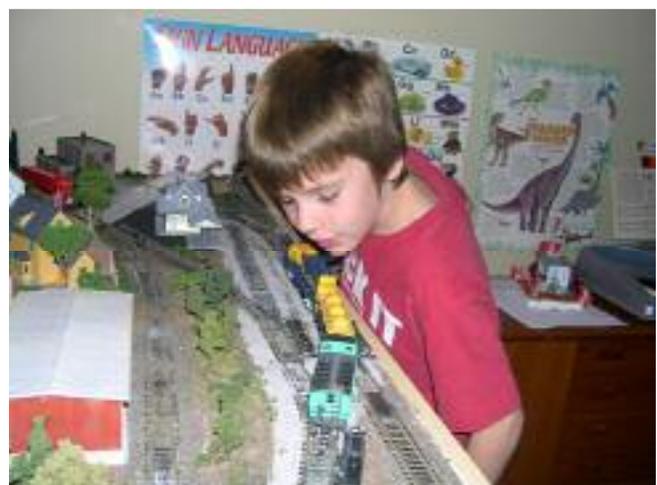
The Raffle layout was finished and cleaned a week prior to the show. At Railfair, it took its customary spot at the main entrance. The layout was set up in the back to back configuration, as it allowed continuous running.

It certainly proved a magnet for young and old, and several youngsters were determined to win it. The winning ticket was bought by Joyce Gunn, the grandmother of John, in whose family room the layout was set up.

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CHEO Raffle layout at Railfair.  
Photo: Beate Herzig



The winner and the new home of the Raffle layout.  
Photo: Peter Joyce

# Scratchbuilding a Farm Silo

By Ron Newby

This story started awhile back when the management of the Clearwater Valley Railway Co. (CVR) invited some members of the Lyon Valley Northern (LVN) management on a tour of the line. The Clearwater Valley Railway Co. is far from a class 1 railway; in fact it is barely making ends meet.

One thing the management of the CVR has learned to do very early on is to close their eyes and not ask questions. On more than one occasion material has shown up when there was supposedly none to be had. The ingenuity of the foremen and workmen have become legendary in these parts and sometimes it get carried away, like when section foreman Sean McGee made a bet with the locals that he could make an inspection car using an airplane engine (but that is another story).



The boys from the CVR and LVN meet in front of the Creedence Saloon for some drinks. Sean McGee was heard to say "Those fellows from the LVN sure are short"



Construction of the silo is well underway.

delivered to the farmer on the LVN before the first frost.

The LVN management took the CVR up on its invitation to visit the line and after the inspection everyone was impressed with the line and how it was built. At least that what was said publicly, privately there were some who thought that it was a miracle that everything stayed on the track and the rail was much too light for their liking.

With nothing to do until the train out the next morning Sean McGee invited the boys from the LVN to the Creedence Saloon in Clearwater for some of the best beer and spirits in this part of the world (at least according to Sean McGee).

After a few rounds the conversation turned to parts of the line that still needed work and unfinished buildings when one of the boys from the LVN mentioned that there was a farm on the LVN that did not have a silo, and did not know if the owner could not afford one, or if it had burned down some time in the past and had yet to be rebuilt.

Now Sean McGee mentioned that building a silo could not be that hard. Well things were said and before you know it someone dared Sean that he could not build one, in fact it was bet that Sean did not even know what a silo looked like, seeing as there were no farms in the mountains and Mr. McGee have never ventured 100 miles from the railway line.

Well Sean McGee was never one to turn down a bet so he stated that anybody could build an overgrown model of a silo, besides how hard would it be to build a half size silo, heck one would not need many tools and the lumber required would be of the thin variety. With that in mind Sean promised a silo would be

The next morning Sean McGee started to ask around to see if anyone knew what a silo looked like and how to build one. Fortunately the foreman from Thuot's metal works grew up on the prairies and knew how to build one, so with his help plans were drawn and Sean gathered a few of his section gang together and started building a silo. At the end of the second day they were well on their way.

Well construction on the silo was delayed as the boys were called to take care of some pesky beavers that were building a dam on a creek near Mosquito flats. It seems that the beavers preferred building their dam upstream of the trestle and that was causing some flooding on the trestle. It seemed the boys would blow up the dam during the day and the beavers would rebuild it overnight.



The silo completed with only the conveyor left to be built.



The boys from the LVN pay a visit to inspect the completed silo.

Not wanting to be outdone by the beavers Sean McGee decided that trapping them would be a better idea and move them to the mouth of Adams Lake where there dam building could be put to good use.

After solving the pesky beaver problem Sam and his crew headed back to Clearwater to continue building the silo. Sean did not like losing bets and the first frost was just around the corner so if he wanted to win the bet, he had to move fast. While Sean and his crew were just finishing up the walls of the silo and ready to start the roof, Ben DiMaria, Assistant General Manager of the rail line happened upon Sean and his crew and inquired about the build. Sean being quick on his feet told Ben that they were building a new sand tower to provide dry sand for the locomotives in the winter time. Sean figured that it would hold enough dry sand to last a month. Seeing as the railway had a hard time keeping the sand from freezing in the winter and that Sean had a knack of coming up with ideas to solve problems, Ben bought the story hook line and sinker.

The Clearwater Valley's management have been wondering why the LVN management has such an interest in the "sand tower". Sean McGee being quick on his feet stated that they were also interested in the "new" technology for storing dry sand as they have the same problem of the sand freezing in the cold prairie winters.

When the visit from the LVN folk came to inspect the "sand tower" they were impressed with the "sand tower" and arrangements were made to ship the tower to the LVN.

Well that's the story behind the building of the silo. In actual fact Chris Lyon was building a farm scene on his layout and was looking for a suitable silo to add to the farm scene. As for the story I thought it would be

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interesting to marry the building of a HO structure where photos of the build would be taken on an O scale layout.

The actual construction of the silo was made by gluing a core of 4 1-1/2" PVC couplings together using PVC glue with a wood veneer wrapped and glued to the couplings so I could glue the individual boards to the core.

Scale 1" x 8" were cut in random lengths of 20', 21' and 22' and stained in a mixture of craft paints, water and india ink (see recipe below). In order to get a variation of colour I took about a third of the wood out of the stain after a 4 hours soak, another third out after 6 hours and the rest after 8 hours.



The silo is temporarily installed on Chris' layout.

#### Recipe used to stain the wood

18-22 oz Water  
1 tsp Americana Charcoal Grey  
1 tsp Americana Graphite  
1/2 tsp Americana Khaki Tan  
1 tsp India ink

Mix ingredients in a jar and shake well. Put the wood to be stained in a large freezer bag and pour in the stain. Shake the bag every couple of hours as the paint will separate from the water. After the wood is stained pour the stain back in the bottle and keep till next time.

Taking random lengths I proceeded to glue the boards around the tower starting at the base and working my way around and up the silo. Once completed I used brown thread to simulate the bands with them spaced close together at the bottom and spacing them a little further apart as I went up.

The roof of the silo posed an interesting problem as Chris had giving me a casting of a silo top from Alder Models that was a second. It was of the dome variety and had a lot of air bubbles in it. To me it was too much work to fill, file and shape the dome so I decided to make my own roof. There is a silo near Rockland on the 174 that has an 8 sided roof that I like, so I proceeded to make an 8-sided roof for the silo. I made the roof out of 1/16 basswood sheets and covered it with paper shingles made by Bar Mills.

The last thing to construct was the conveyor that goes up the side of the silo. To make the conveyor I made a shell from 1/16" basswood sheet and covered that with the 1" x 8" boards I had left over from the silo.

This turned out to be an easy and fun project to do and it is great seeing it on the farm scene on Chris' layout.

*Note: Mike Chambers formulated this recipe and you can find other recipes and tips on how to use them on his website at*

<http://homepage.mac.com/michael21/CMSHome/cmshome.html>

# Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The September Display Table theme was “Summer Projects” and it looks like that despite the fantastic summer weather, a number of the members were able to find time to dedicate to the hobby!



Peter Joyce is explaining how he converted a commercial truss bridge kit into a model of a span of the Victoria bridge in Montreal.  
Photo: Andreas Mank

Starting off we had Peter Joyce's O scale Montreal Victoria Railway truss bridge. This is a most impressive structure that is a good 6 feet long. The central truss was built from a wooden kit to which Peter scratch built the cantilevered external road and tramways.

As we all know, Mike Hamer has been building numerous laser kits etc for his future layout expansion. Today he brought out a harbour scene that has a number of the kits we have seen over the past year. The diorama had a plethora of details and fantastic “sight lines” and I cannot wait to see the layout expansion!

Bob Farquhar has a nose for locating the neat stuff in the hobby. On display he had two packages of laser cut detail parts from Vector Cut. One was a set of HO scale wrenches (can you believe that) and a set of automotive parts. All burned out from wood.

Lorne Munro is up to his old tricks with scratch building a plaster structure. Lorne had the interior post/beam framing on display complete with the machinery from Scale Structures. The hydrocal castings for the exterior walls will be carved on both sides to resemble stone.

Grant Knowles, feeling guilty, had a recent Hon3 acquisition on display. This was a MicroTrains Colorado & Southern flat car complete with a resin log load. Grant had weathered the car with chalks, installed Kadee 714 couplers and stack pocket posts.

Jim Baxter helped out with Railfair Raffle Layout build this year by building the Atlas train station kit. This has got to be one of the best buys for a plastic kit as it makes up into a very interesting station.

Our noble S scale enthusiast, Alex Binkley had a brand new purchase on display – a FM 10-44 from Smoky Mountain Models. It looks like it will make up into a very functional and impressive model.

Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the September meet web page:

[http://members.fortunecity.com/gknowles/meets/sept\\_10/sept\\_10.htm](http://members.fortunecity.com/gknowles/meets/sept_10/sept_10.htm)

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The Raffle layout set-up was accompanied by a poster explaining about the different possibilities for set-up and operation. Right next to the Raffle layout, our switching module had been set up to the delight of all the young engineers!

The layout was Both layouts also served as advertising tools to encourage interested parties to attend the MR 101 session presented by the SLD on November 6. Judging by the attendance at MR 101, it seems to have worked quite well.



# Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

***When:***

**Saturday, November 27, 2010**

***Where:***

Kitchissippi United Church  
630 Island Park Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario

Doors open at 9:00 am -- Admission \$5.00

***What's on:***

***Morning:***

**Division Business**

**Clinic**

- Ron Newby  
*The Canada and Atlantic Railway*
- tbd

**Display**

- Projects that did not quite work out as planned

**Door Prizes**

- You never know what to expect!

***Afternoon:***

- Kitbusters meeting

